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STATE FOR NEA/MAG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/20/2018
TAGS: PREL PGOV PBTS EG WI MO
SUBJECT: MOROCCO: MFA CONCERNED ABOUT U.S. TRANSITION

Classified By: Pol Couns Craig Karp for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C//NF) An Egyptian Embassy colleague told Poloff on November 21 that the Egyptian Ambassador in Rabat was convoked on November 13 by Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) then-Secretary General Omar Hillale. Hillale asked Cairo to issue a declaration publicly supporting the Government of Morocco's (GOM) Sahara autonomy proposal. The Egyptian Ambassador responded saying that his government, as always, provided explicit support for the GOM position &behind closed doors8 and in internal Arab discussions, but could not publicly make a statement and risk upsetting Algeria.

¶2. (C//NF) The Egyptian officer said that Hillale pressed the Ambassador, saying such a letter &would help Morocco's negotiating position," and that Hillale seemed quite agitated. The officer added that the MFA in Rabat, in particular, is quite concerned about how the change in U.S. administrations will affect the USG's stance towards the Sahara discussions.

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Riley